

CLAIMS

What we claim is:

- 1 1. An instant messaging communication system that enables a user to obtain
2 instant messaging at destination devices other than the user's normal terminals, said
3 system comprising
4
5 a presence processor,
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7 a messenger client connected to said presence processor, and
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9 a unified instant messaging processor communicating with said presence
10 processor and with said user terminals, said unified instant message processor
11 including
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13 means for storing user defined terminal selections and for storing user
14 preferences, and
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16 a further processor connected to said storing means and comprising
17 state reporting means for receiving from said unified instant message processor
18 information as to the user defined local presence states and means for formatting
19 and routing data in communication with said presence processor.
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21 2. A system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said means for formatting and
22 routing data comprises means for formatting and routing message data and means for
23 formatting and routing presence data.
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25 3. A system in accordance with claim 2 wherein said unified messaging processor
26 further comprises a protocol interface between said further processor and said
27 presence processor.

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29 4. A system in accordance with claim 2 wherein communication between said
30 unified messaging processor and said presence processor, between said messenger
31 client and said presence processor, and between said user terminals and said unified
32 instant messaging processor is via the internet.

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34 5. An instant messaging communication system in accordance with claim 1
35 wherein said unified instant messaging processor is a central server for a plurality of
36 users, each of said plurality of users having a plurality of different terminals.

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38 6. A method for enabling instant messaging with a user at different locations for
39 that user, said method including the steps of

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41 transmitting data from a presence processor to a unified instant message
42 processor,

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44 at said unified instant message processor determining whether said data
45 concerns a presence or a message,

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47 based upon said determining step checking with prior stored information as to
48 whether said data should be forwarded,

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50 if said data is to be forwarded, checking prior stored information as to the local
51 presence state for said data; and

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53 formatting and routing said data to the intended terminal, as determined from
54 said local presence state for said data.

55 7. The method in accordance with claim 6 further enabling a user to reply to a
56 forwarded instant message and wherein said formatting and routing step comprises
57 including within the forwarded message a specific return address including correlation
58 information, and said method further comprising the steps of

59 monitoring said return address for a reply from the user terminal,
60 accepting the reply from a user terminal, correlating the reply with a proper
61 instant messaging session, and translating the reply into a format acceptable to the
62 presence processor, and
63 delivering the reply to the proper instant messaging session on the presence
64 processor.

65 8. The method in accordance with claim 7 wherein communication between the
66 unified instant message processor and a user terminal is via email.

67 9. The method in accordance with claim 8 wherein said unified instant message
68 processor runs a Simple Mail Transport Protocol process and creates dynamic email
69 addresses to do correlation.

70 10. The method in accordance with claim 6 further comprising the step of
71 registering with the presence processor on behalf of a user.

72 11. The method in accordance with claim 10 wherein said registering step
73 comprises the steps of

74 the unified instant message processor prompting the user for a local state,
75 the unified instant message processor reporting the user global state to the
76 presence processor, and

77 the presence processor delivering to the unified instant messaging processor
78 status information for buddies of the user.